

10/26/69

Mr. Milton Brenner, Atty at law
National Bank of Commerce Bldg.
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. Brenner,

Your dislike of and feud with Jim Garrison is your own affair. On this I have no comment. However, when you retail the most serious error about the assassination of an American President and the frivolity termed an investigation and the fiction palmed off as a "Report", I feel comment is warranted. I therefore write to call one such error to your attention.

The seventh section of the serialization, which has just reached me, concludes: "The Warren Commission, after an extensive investigation, could find nothing to connect Oswald to the Camp Street address."

Break this down into the finest possible parts, and each part is wrong.

The Commission itself made absolutely no investigation. I have combed its files carefully on this point. The FBI made no investigation. Had you read the appropriate pages of my SEARCHED IN THE FBI, where the pertinent files are cited, you'd have known this. The Report itself is the source of your claim. To save you the time of looking into your notes, I enclose a photocopy of page 408. This is an extra copy to which other documents are attached. I suggest you will find them pertinent on the question of "extensive" and, what should be the test, thoroughness. The words of the Report so like yours are, "...extensive investigation was not able to connect Oswald with that address..."

Not a single witness was called on this point. There is not a single directive to the FBI on it that I have been able to uncover. The FBI engaged in the most transparent trickery on just this point, pretending that the addresses 241 Camp and 361 Lafayette are different locations when they are one. (Report enclosed.) Even worse, Benister, who arranged the space for the Cuban Revolutionary Council (organized, financed and directed by the CIA, which funded it until Oswald went to New Orleans), was known to have arranged for this space by the two witnesses interviewed by the FBI. This information is in neither report.

In fact, not one of the witnesses who have placed Oswald at that building was ever questioned by the Commission or, to the best of my knowledge, by the FBI or the Secret Service. And Oswald was known to both to have used this address before the assassination. The FBI is still trying to suppress this proof, but I have it from another source and confirmation of it from the Department of Justice, in writing.

The Commission lawyer in charge of this aspect had much knowledge of that address and the people there he was careful to keep out of the Report, of his interrogations - of everything. None of it is in any of the pertinent files. He knew, for example, that the El Fundera group. He knew that Terrie and Arcacha were friends. And much more. If you'd like, let me know, and if I return to New Orleans I'll be glad to play a tape-recording of his attempt at explaining all this away for you. As a lawyer, you may be interested in his explanation about how the basic conclusion of the Report on conspiracy was written when the Report was on the press and the presses were about to roll - with not even a typist, leave of no a member of the Commission, to check it.

In this connection I call to your attention the enclosed "report" on the really "extensive" investigation of Frank Bertes - all six lines of it! Do you suppose the FBI had to ask him if the OGC was an anti-Castro organization when our government organized it for that purpose and to supply the government-in-exile if the Bay of Pigs succeeded. Now it happens that Bertes has been a CIA employee, as he personally confirmed to me. It is no secret in New Orleans. It also happens that these revanchist Cubans used that address as long as Senator was alive. During the time Oswald was in New Orleans, Bertes was head of the OGC. His name is in Oswald's address book (but don't look for this in the "extensive investigation" recorded in the Warren Report). When the FBI transcribed this notebook for the Commission, it was careful to mask this appearance of Bertes' name.

Just how pro-Castro do you suppose Oswald was, soliciting expression of pro-Castro sympathy to be sent to the address used by these irrational and rough and irresponsible character? He did just that, using that address on his literature.

As further evidence of the "extensiveness" and thoroughness and dependability of this investigation so impressive to you, it happens that part of the file on Oswald's leaflet is attached to the papers enclosed. One entire paragraph of the first sheet uses the language employed in the Report, "Under the name Yaxxin Osborne, Oswald ordered 1,000 handbills from the Jones Printing Co. Both Jones Printing Co. witnesses said the opposite, that it was not Oswald. This is not only recorded in the FBI records I will supply, should you desire them, but my personal interviews with them are even more specific in proving this was not Oswald.

There are literally dozens of witnesses on just these questions never interviewed by any representative of the government, and a fair number of those who were questioned who were not asked the right questions. However, I believe the foregoing, if not all the relevant information I have, should be enough to satisfy you of the error of your writing and, I hope, to lead you to correct the book before it is published, if not to ask the paper to set the record straight.

Let me add this, which might interest you. Twice in November 1967, your client, Layton Hartens, asked me to intercede with Garrison for him to change his plea. The first time I told him I would not talk with him without your approval. Then he said the second time that you did not approve, I told him he was unfair to you. I felt, however, that I had to report the incident to Garrison. He refused this success, saying he would not see Hartens except in your presence and with your assent.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg